

# RecNet—Networking Leisure Professionals

## Our Mission ...

*“To support the advancement of park, recreation and environmental conservation opportunities through education, resource tools and advocacy.”*

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Looking to get your community excited about playing tennis or just looking for a good time on the tennis court?

Then it's time to get the party started! Tennis Block Parties are an excellent way to showcase an area's local tennis programs, and a fun, festive way to introduce new players to the sport.

Held at public parks, tennis facilities, private clubs and other venues across the nation, Tennis Block Parties are a dynamic, interactive, and inclusive way to bring together your community's tennis players in a setting designed to highlight all the wonderful things that playing tennis can do for them...all in a single afternoon!

Whether you're looking for new tennis friends, a tip on that backhand volley, the latest advances in racquet technology, or just a new sport to get your child into, then a Tennis Block Party is for you! Want to flex your muscles trying to set a personal serving record or trying to beat a teaching pro? At a Tennis Block Party you can expect to find all kinds of activities like those and much more:

- **Family Fun Zone** – Parents teach kids how to play tennis in a fun, non-competitive atmosphere.
- **Demo Racquet Court** – Attendees can test the latest equipment on the market, including the newest racquets.
- **Tennis 101** – Designed with the new player in mind, Tennis 101 provides a

## A DYNAMIC, INTERACTIVE AND INCLUSIVE WAY TO BRING TOGETHER YOUR COMMUNITY

quick way to start rallying with a partner.

- **Beat the Pros** – Teaching pros and top level players take on all comers in an abbreviated tennis match.
- **Team Tennis Challenge** – Players enjoy the team experience of the sport beyond doubles.
- **Champions of the Court** – Competitors can strut their stuff and remain on the court until defeated by challengers in abbreviated tennis matches.

Two Tennis Block Parties are already being held in Iowa this summer. On June 10, a Tennis Block Party will be held in Davenport at Central High School, from 9:00 a.m. to noon. On July 3, the party will head to Des Moines at Birdland Park from 9:00 a.m. to noon.

For more information on attending or having your club start up a Tennis Block Party, contact **Richard Dedor, Tennis Service Representative for Iowa**, at (319) 266-5577 or via e-mail at [rdedor@movalley.usta.com](mailto:rdedor@movalley.usta.com).

*Submitted by Jeff Sikes, Senior Communications Coordinator, USTA/Missouri Valley Section.*





## RECREATION SPECIALIST—SOCCER City of Des Moines

The City of Des Moines is seeking an individual to supervise and direct activities at the James W. Cownie Soccer Park. The selected candidate will serve as the on-site contact person during league play, tournaments and other scheduled activities. The Recreation Specialist will supervise others in leading activities and will work closely with other Park and Recreation staff to ensure proper development of recreational activities. Other duties include tracking participation statistics and maintaining, preparing and submitting required reports. This position will also perform other related work as required.

The selected individual will work afternoons and evenings, including some weekends. Salary range is \$10.27 to \$12.29 hourly, depending on education and experience and will work up to 35 hours weekly. Work environment includes indoor and outdoor conditions. The position is non-civil service and is considered regular part-time.

Any combination equivalent to graduation from high school is required. Two years of responsible recreational experience is desired, but not required. A college degree in Recreation, Leisure Services, Education or related field may be substituted for the preferred two years of experience. Submittal of college transcripts with application required, if applicable.

**The City of Des Moines' Residency Requirement is in effect for this position. Applicant must be a resident of the City of Des Moines within seven months of appointment date and maintain residency within the City of Des Moines while employed in this position.**

Apply to Human Resources, Room 103, City Hall, 400 Robert D. Ray Drive, Des Moines, IA, 50309. Open until a sufficient number of qualified applications is received to fill the position. **Qualified applicants with a disability who need a reasonable accommodation in order to take the examination must inform this office by the application date.**

## Aquatic Workshop for Pool Managers and Staff

Once again this year the Aquatics Committee will be hosting a special spring workshop focusing on issues relevant to your lead aquatic staff. This year's topics include:

- Reflecting a positive perception of the lifeguards to the public
- Body Blindness in surveying facilities
- Emergency Action Plans and how the EMT service can support and assist your facility
- Dealing with "difficult" rules and conflict resolution
- A round table discussion on special events, in-service and professionalism between staff.



The event will be held at the Clive Family Aquatic Center on Friday May 19. Sessions will run from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. with a tour of this fabulous facility to follow. Cost is \$10.00 per staff member which includes lunch and all materials. Full time Aquatic Supervisors are invited to attend with their staff at no fee. For registration information, call the IPRA office.

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## Take Care of Your Heart at the Cedar Falls Recreation Center

Health and cardiovascular health are very important in everyday living. There are a few items that help basic heart care. Keeping your intake of sodium below 2,400 milligrams per day, eating whole foods including fruits and vegetables, and limiting your saturated and trans fat intake are just a few. The FDA recommends proper supplementation with folic acid, magnesium and vitamin E. These vitamins and minerals can help keep your heart in important condition.

Of course your heart should also be exercised on a regular basis. Good basic exercise should entail bringing up the heart rate between your 70 – 85 percent maximum heart rate, so your heart itself can be exercised. It is a muscle you know! Exercise is not only good for losing weight it also helps work a very important muscle and helps create certain chemical responses in the body to help alleviate stress, tiredness, depression and much more. There are many additional advantages to working your heart with exercise than just losing weight.



At the Cedar Falls Recreation Center we encourage our members through wellness discussions and information to provide their lives with a total body wellness. This is why we offer everything from cycling and traditional aerobics to pilates and yoga. Total body wellness is important, not just the exercising portion. We also offer NIA, which stands for non-impact aerobics. This program provides cardiovascular exercise that provides no impact, yet completely exercises the heart and the body. It combines dance, martial arts, tai chi and yoga as part of its makeup. Our facility also has a wide range of cardiovascular machines, free weights and select machines to compliment our members' wellness opportunities.



We also offer recreational activities from those who want to compete to those who are just in it for the fun and socialization aspect. All aspects of wellness are important for your heart. Not only an intense cardio, but also something that will relax you and provide quiet time for all around wellness.

**Photos of patrons taking advantage of the weight room equipment at the Cedar Falls Recreation Center.**

## NAYS Releases Guidelines for Background Checks

In response to the uncertainty and confusion about the ever-important topic of volunteer background screening in youth sports, the National Alliance For Youth Sports (NAYS) - America's leading advocate for positive, safe youth sports - is offering youth sports organizations another tool with its latest initiative designed to help leagues navigate the volunteer background check process. NAYS has compiled a document outlining guidelines and recommended disqualifiers pertaining to background checks, and has also secured discounted pricing with several of the nation's top screening companies for youth sports agencies wishing to perform background checks on their volunteers. This information can be found on NAYS' Volunteer Screening Web page, [www.nays.org](http://www.nays.org).

In September, NAYS held a special session during its fourth annual International Youth Sports Congress in Denver focusing on the subject of background screening. Session attendees heard from several panelists with experience in the fields of background screening, youth sports and law enforcement, and then gathered together to discuss options and disqualifiers in background checks among youth sports volunteers. That information, along with the input of several industry experts, was used to compose the NAYS "Background Checks In Youth Sports: Guidelines For Your Organization" document.

"I think everyone agrees that background checks are a very important part of the overall youth sports volunteer screening process," said Fred Engh, founder and CEO of NAYS, which celebrates its 25th Anniversary this year. "We want all volunteer youth sports organizations to have clear information about this subject and resources to call on. We hope this will allow more organizations to perform background checks on their youth sports volunteers." As stories of child abuse and other horrible crimes against our youth grow more common, background checks have rapidly become an important - but sometimes overwhelming - issue in the youth sports community. The NAYS document covers the major points of background checks, and also provides additional Web and print resources, including a directory of searchable sexual offender Web sites by state.

Some highlights in the document include:

- An effective and prudent background check includes a social security number and address verification, a county criminal record search and a sexual offender registry search.
- Convictions that should rule out a candidate if found during a background check include: any crime, mis-

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# Spotlight On Rachel Maehl

Rachel is a graduate of Simpson College. She joins the Fort Dodge Parks and Recreation Department as Program Supervisor. Her duties will include overseeing city aquatics programs, coordinating special events and developing office marketing pieces—including the department’s website and season program brochure. Originally a Fort Dodge resident, Rachel returns to the area with her husband, Ryan, and nine-month old daughter, Lainey. Rachel’s e-mail address is [rmaehl@fortdodgeiowa.org](mailto:rmaehl@fortdodgeiowa.org). Welcome to IPRA, Rachel!



*Rachel Maehl, Program Supervisor, Fort Dodge Parks and Recreation, is looking forward to her very first IPRA Spring Conference April 3-5 in Dubuque.*



Kadia Angela Cole was born at 8:01 a.m., Tuesday, March 21. She weighed in at 8 pounds, 9 ounces and was 21 inches long. She has lots of dark hair. Everyone is doing very well. Kadia is the daughter of Angela Cole, Director of the Hiawatha Parks and Recreation Department. Congratulations to all members of the Cole Family!!



McKenzie Kiger is the new Recreation Supervisor for the City of Clive. She grew up in the Exira/Audubon area of Iowa and graduated from the University of Iowa with a degree in Health, Leisure and Sport Studies with an emphasis in Therapeutic Recreation. She also minored in psychology and attained Aging Studies certification. McKenzie has lived in Loveland, Colorado the past five years with her husband, Andy, and their lab-mix, Stella, enjoying the mild weather, fluffy snow and mountains. In Colorado, she was working as a Therapeutic Recreation Coordinator for the City of Fort Collins in the Recreation Division’s Adaptive Recreation Opportunities program. McKenzie had the opportunity to start a new position there with the funding of two three-year federal grants, working to establish better relationships between Colorado State University and the City of Fort Collins, as well as many other community agencies that assisted in helping people with disabilities gain independence. She was able to coach a variety of sports, lead programs for people with and without disabilities in self advocacy, health and wellness and, of course, fun! McKenzie was also very involved with the aquatics division in training, inclusion and water fitness. She enjoyed being on the Colorado Therapeutic Recreation Society’s state board as professional development chair for two years, as well as being on the board of DOVIA (Directors of Volunteers in Agencies). Through these agencies, she was not only able to meet some amazing professionals and friends, but she learned from some of the “best in the business”, as well.

In her spare time, McKenzie enjoys relaxation!! She admits that she loves sports, playing and watching, and is a BIG Iowa Hawkeye fan. Living in Colorado, she learned to love camping in the mountains for the warm days and cool nights. McKenzie enjoys being around water and the sun and loves to water ski when there is an opportunity! Even though she lived in Colorado, she never mastered snow-skiing, but came to a self realization that she is more of a beach bum than a snow bunny, so she’s excited to have the opportunity to return to Iowa. She is looking forward to being around the pool on a daily basis again and bringing some of the appreciation and known benefits of recreation that Coloradans believe in to good ol’ Iowa farm country!

Contact McKenzie at [mkiger@cityofclive.com](mailto:mkiger@cityofclive.com).

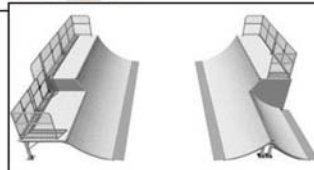
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# Hiawatha Park and Recreation Commission Steps UP!

By Angie Cole, Director

In my seven years of working for the City of Hiawatha, I have gotten engaged, married, had a boy, had a girl and recently gave birth to a second baby girl. After two of the five years as Park and Recreation Director, the Park and Recreation Commission asked how they could help out while I am gone on maternity leave. Knowing that there is office staff to help out but no one specific to take my place, all of us want to make sure the ball doesn't get dropped on any special event or program while I am gone. After some thought, I asked each Commission member if they would be willing to help out with a project (being a special event or program). With this, I would have one person on the Commission to bounce ideas off regarding the project, they would attend the event/program and we would all feel better about me taking some time off. As Park and Recreation Directors, many of us feel that our volunteer boards/commissions put in enough time volunteering to attend our meetings. So I was thrilled when my Com-

mission was excited about the idea of getting more involved with the department. Commissioner Debra Theis offered to work with the Easter Egg Hunt. I planned the basics from last year and now she is working to find volunteers and finish up the details. I will not be at this event so she will be in charge. Commissioner Cathy Smith volunteered to work with a new holiday special event and parade. This event won't take place until December, but we have already formed a committee and had our first meeting to put together a budget and start to look for sponsors. Other members of the Commission, Rick Nash, Larry Eveland and Traci Brundrett have all offered to help with one or more events or programs. So far our arrangement seems to be working out great. I thank my Commission for all their time and effort in making our goals a success, and I en-



**I.P.R.A .  
SCHOLARSHIP  
AUCTION  
Tuesday, April 4**

Please remember to contribute items to the IPRA Scholarship Auction. Suggested items include:

- Hotel packages
- Gift certificates
- Golf packages
- Merchandise
- Tickets
- Sweatshirts, hats, etc.

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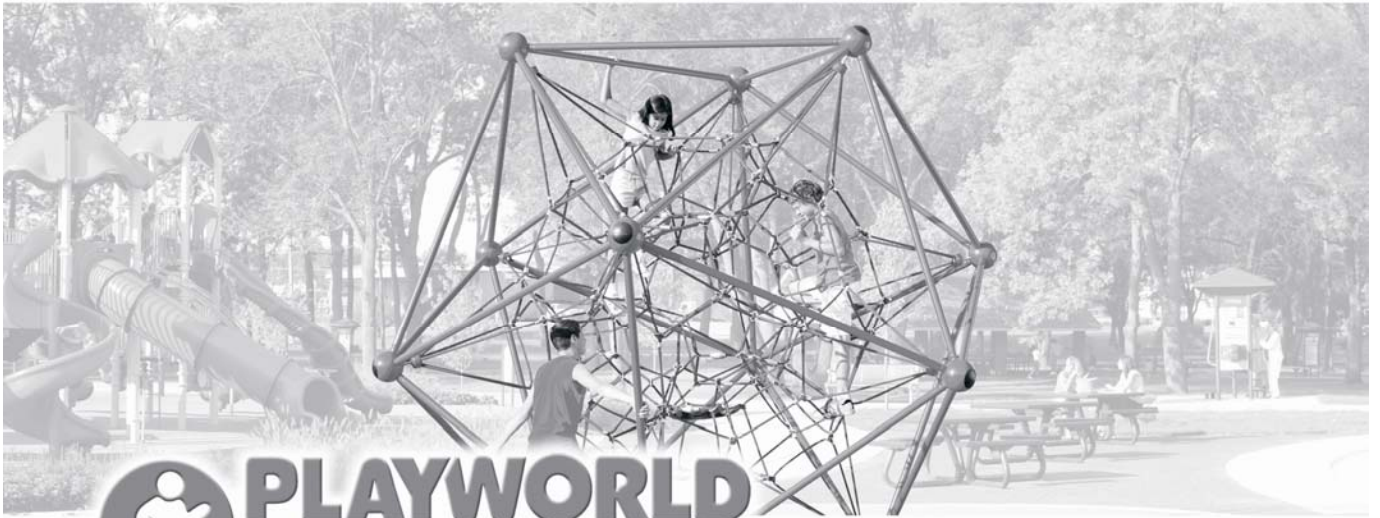
“...HELPED REACH AGREEMENT WHEN IT DID NOT SEEM IT WAS POSSIBLE.”

“STAKEHOLDERS WALK AWAY FEELING A PART OF THE PROCESS AND THAT THEIR OPINIONS WERE HEARD.”

“...CREATIVE AND VISIONARY WHEN CITIZENS WERE REQUIRED TO LEAVE A POSITION OF COMFORT AND THINK ABOUT THE FUTURE OF OUR COMMUNITY.”

“...NEVER LOSES TRACK OF THE PURPOSE OF A MEETING AND KEEPS THEM CLEAR AND CONCISE.”

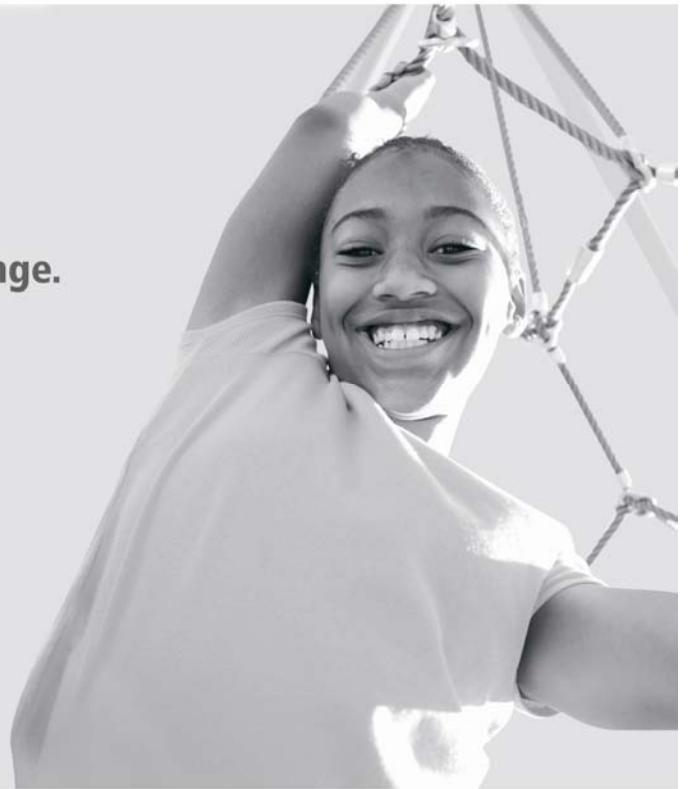
“...PARTICULAR EXPERTISE IN FACILITATION OF PUBLIC INPUT AND TRANSLATING THE INPUT RECEIVED INTO PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS AND DESIGNS.”



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## IPRA Calendar of Events

### April

- 3-5 IPRA Spring Conference—Grand River Center, Dubuque
- 8 State Spot Shot Competition—Grinnell
- 10 CEU/Aquatic Update—Iowa City
- 11-12 Certified Pool Operator Course—Iowa City
- 24 CEU/Aquatic Update—Clear Lake
- 25-26 Certified Pool Operator Course—Clear Lake
- 28 Arbor Day

### May

- 15 CEU/Aquatic Update—Cedar Rapids
- 16-17 Certified Pool Operator Course—Cedar Rapids
- 19 Pool Manager’s Workshop—Clive
- 29 IPRA State Office Closed—Memorial Day



## NAYS Releases Guidelines

(Continued from Page 3)

- demeanor or felony, involving a child as an accomplice or victim; felony drug crimes; sexual assault/rape and any sort of physical abuse/battery.
- Organizations should form a group specifically designated to oversee the background check process.
- Web site links for additional resources, including sexual offender databases, a searchable directory of Congress and Senate members by region, and the National Sex Offender Public Registry are included.

To provide further assistance to youth sports organizations, NAYS has identified a list of three national screening companies - VolunteerCheck , VolunteerSelect Plus and California-based Accurate Background - that have agreed to offer agencies participating in NAYS programs and youth sports organizations referred through the NAYS Web site discounted pricing on background check packages that meet the recommended NAYS guidelines. Prices per check range from \$14.50 to \$18.

Visit the Volunteer Screening Web page or e-mail [pr@nays.org](mailto:pr@nays.org).